



**BILL RICHARDSON**  
GOVERNOR

*State of New Mexico*  
**ENVIRONMENT DEPARTMENT**  
*Office of the Secretary*  
*Harold Runnels Building*  
*1190 St. Francis Drive, P.O. Box 26110*  
*Santa Fe, New Mexico 87502-6110*  
*Telephone (505) 827-2855*  
*Fax (505) 827-2836*



**RON CURRY**  
SECRETARY

**DERRITH WATCHMAN-MOORE**  
DEPUTY SECRETARY

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Contact: Jon Goldstein, NMED Communications Dir.  
Phone: (505) 827-0314

## **Environment Department to Hold Community Town Hall Meeting on Helena Chemical Plant in Mesquite**

(Santa Fe, NM) — The New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) will hold a community town hall meeting on **Tuesday March 29<sup>th</sup> from 7 to 10 pm at the Mesquite Volunteer Fire Department, #1 Firehouse Road, Mesquite, NM.**

This meeting is designed to give community members a forum to get answers to questions they may have surrounding the operations of the Helena fertilizer plant and its environmental impacts. At the meeting, both a general background on the plant's operations and specific information on recent NMED permitting and enforcement activities will be presented. Representatives of both Helena and NMED will also be present to answer questions.

Topics to be covered include:

- Status of air quality permitting and ground water permitting of Helena Chemical;
- Status of the Notice of Violations related to Helena Chemical's operation;
- Air Quality issues related to Helena Chemical operation;
- Ground water issues related to Helena Chemical operation; and
- A discussion of opportunities for the public to get notice of, and become involved in, the permitting of Helena Chemical.

"This meeting should begin a process whereby the plant gets a better understanding of local concerns and residents acquire insights into the facility's operations," said NMED Deputy Secretary Derrith Watchman-Moore. "I hope the information shared at this meeting begins to build a bridge between Helena and local residents."

Tennessee-based Helena Chemical operates a fertilizer plant at 251 John Grisham Drive in Mesquite.

Environmental concerns at the Helena plant were first brought to NMED's attention by complaints from the public as well as by Senator Cynthia Nava, Representative Joseph Cervantes and County Commissioner Oscar Butler.

For further information contact Jon Goldstein, Communications Director, NMED at (505) 827-0314.

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